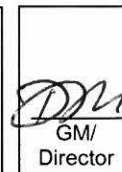
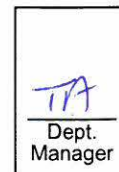


#### AGENDA INFORMATION

☒ Regular Meeting  
☐ Other:

Date: April 12, 2021  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## The District of North Vancouver REPORT TO COUNCIL

March 26, 2021

File: 10.5080.01/000.000

**AUTHOR:** Tina Atva, Manager, Community Planning  
Natalie Chiang, Planning Assistant

**SUBJECT:** UBCM 2021 Strengthening Communities' Services Program – North Shore Application

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#### RECOMMENDATION:

THAT staff are directed to work with the City of North Vancouver and District of West Vancouver to submit a joint regional application for the North Shore to secure funding under UBCM's 2021 Strengthening Communities' Services Program.

AND THAT Council supports the City of North Vancouver as the primary applicant for the North Shore application, to apply for, receive and manage the 2021 UBCM Strengthening Communities' Services grant funding on the District of North Vancouver's behalf.

#### REASON FOR REPORT:

This report provides information on the UBCM 2021 Strengthening Communities' Services Program<sup>1</sup> for the purpose of obtaining Council approval to submit a grant application due April 16, 2021. The grant application would be for up to \$2,500,000. This would allow the three North Shore municipalities, in partnership with the local First Nations and local service providers, to improve the health and safety of unsheltered homeless people and address related community impacts.

#### BACKGROUND:

The 2020 point in time Homeless Count revealed 121 homeless individuals on the North Shore. Of these 46 people (or 38%) were unsheltered. The North Shore 2020 Extended Count Pilot project revealed higher numbers with 212 homeless individuals.

Some of society's most vulnerable members face challenges that have only worsened in the context of COVID-19. The pandemic has led to an increase in the visibility of unsheltered homelessness and related health and safety challenges in many communities. Many local

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<sup>1</sup>BC Strengthening Communities' Services Program 2021 Program & Application Guide  
<https://www.ubcm.ca/EN/main/funding/lgps/strengthening-communities-services.html>

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governments, in partnership with social sector service providers, have responded to these challenges with a variety of activities, despite pressure on revenue and staff capacity.

To aid these endeavours, The Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia are providing \$540 million in shared local funding to manage the impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic under the Safe Restart Agreement.

Within this agreement, \$100 million is being administered through the Strengthening Communities' Services Program via UBCM. Funding would support local governments that wish to take action, understanding that this will complement parallel provincial efforts. Applications must meet one or more of the program's intended outcomes:

- Improved health and safety of unsheltered homeless people living in public or private spaces, including reduced risk of COVID-19 and other disease transmissions;
- Reduced community concerns about public health and safety in neighbourhoods where unsheltered homeless populations are seeing temporary shelter and services;
- Improved coordination among eligible applicants and health/social service providers, Indigenous organizations and others; and
- Increased capacity of eligible applicants to work with homeless persons and Indigenous organizations toward culturally safe and trauma-informed responses.

This program is meant to bridge the period between the COVID-19 outbreak and the post-COVID recovery period.

**EXISTING POLICY:**

**Council Strategic Directions 2019-2022**

- Increasing housing diversity and addressing affordability

**Official Community Plan and Targeted OCP Review**

- Several policies aimed at supporting our most disadvantaged residents and eliminating and preventing homelessness on the North Shore
- The Targeted OCP Review will identify actions to address housing and other key issues and nurture a more inclusive and equitable community

**Rental, Social, and Affordable Housing Strategy**

- Identifies vulnerable persons at risk of homelessness as a priority group, and contains policies to address the housing needs of vulnerable populations at risk of being homeless.

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**Other Initiatives**

- District of North Vancouver Rental, Social and Affordable Housing Task Force
- The North Shore Homelessness Action Initiative (NSHAI) – a new forum for coordination amongst officials and agencies with direct and indirect authority for homelessness actions;
- North Shore Homelessness Task Force – formed in 1998 with a broad based membership that seeks to eliminate and prevent homelessness; and
- North Shore Poverty Reduction Plan - a regional application submitted under UBCM's Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program in February 2021. The District of West Vancouver submitted on behalf of the District and City of the North Vancouver. The outcome of this joint application is pending.

**ANALYSIS:**

**Grant Opportunity**

Under this program, eligible applicants are all local governments and Treaty First Nations. Two or more eligible applicants may submit a single regional application and demonstrate cost efficiencies. Funding is based on population (75,000-200,000 population: \$2,500,000). Local governments are encouraged to engage with local First Nations and Indigenous organizations to help build relationships, benefit both communities and enhance reconciliation.

To be eligible for funding applications must also:

- Demonstrate evidence of need in the community;
- Provide temporary solutions and not create long-term financial obligations that will not be supported by the applicant;
- Include new activities or expansion of existing ones; and
- Be completed within one year of the date of the grant approval.

**Proposed North Shore Application – Proposed Project Activities**

In response to this grant opportunity, staff from the three municipalities, Squamish Nation, Tsleil-Waututh Nation and the Lookout Housing and Health Society met to discuss potential projects. A coordinated approach was identified as a preferred way to meet the needs of homeless residents on the North Shore. The City of North Vancouver offered to lead a regional application.

The coordinated staff team identified a suite of activities that could be reasonably undertaken within the program's one year time frame. The delivery framework seeks to improve access

to services where homeless individuals are currently located. It also supports relationship building and culturally-informed responses. As well, significant improvements in regional coordination are anticipated through this project.

Proposed activities are broadly grouped into three areas as described below. The total funding request is currently approximately \$1,900,000. The project activities and accompanying funding request will be further refined with partners prior to the grant application being submitted.

**1. Supporting the urban Indigenous unsheltered homeless population in partnership with Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations**

The Indigenous population is overrepresented in the homeless population on the North Shore, and the capacity of the Nations to focus on supporting unsheltered members living elsewhere was very limited prior to COVID-19. This capacity has further been reduced during the pandemic.

- **Proposed Activity: Indigenous Outreach Team**

A cross-jurisdictional outreach team based on two full-time Indigenous outreach workers (one managed by Lookout, one based within Squamish Nation) supported by two-part time cultural workers (based within Squamish Nation). Although there is focus on Squamish and Tsleil Waututh members, the outreach team will have a mandate to engage all Indigenous individuals and support would not be limited to members of the two nations.

**Funding request:** Approximately \$300,000

Lookout Housing and Health Society and First Nations partners would also provide in-kind resources in the form of management and administrative support for the outreach team.

(Note that the District of North Vancouver also provides core funding to Lookout (approximately \$22,500 for 2021) for homelessness outreach workers who work closely with the District's Park rangers.)

**2. Mobile and Fixed Location Service Provision**

- **Proposed Activity: Mobile Service Provision**

Enhanced outreach to unsheltered homeless individuals would be provided by qualified staff in a mobile unit. This seven day-a-week single point of contact model takes the 'front door' of services to where individuals are.

Mobile units would be leased vehicles equipped with basic hygiene and health facilities. The primary staffing of the vehicle would be provided by Lookout Housing and Health Society, with opportunities for other partners to participate. The enhanced outreach capabilities would also enable specific harm reduction



services in response to the increasing urgency the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to the overdose crisis.

Mobile services respond to the unique geography of the North Shore where unsheltered homeless individuals are spread out and in less visible locations. They would provide much need access to services, many of which were in locations that closed due to the pandemic.

**Funding request:** Approximately \$700,000

Lookout would provide in kind resource in the form of management and administrative support for the outreach team (two full-time and two part-time staff). Leasing of the mobile unit(s) and associated operational administration through existing municipal contracting arrangements may be possible and will be explored.

- **Proposed Activity: Fixed Location Service Provision**

Each municipality would identify options and preferred locations for basic services for the comfort and dignity of unsheltered individuals. Dependent on needs and locational requirements, this could include services such as:

- sanitation for those living in vehicles and on boats;
- hygiene facilities including bathroom facilities, showers and laundry provided on municipal land; and
- warming/cooling centres (e.g. an alternate Extreme Weather Response location to the current temporary location at North Shore Neighbourhood House).

These fixed location services could be a continuation of existing temporary arrangements and/or for provision of additional temporary services. Services would be located in places deemed appropriate in each respective jurisdiction, subject to feasibility analysis and community engagement.

**Funding request:** Approximately \$600,000

This funding amount would cover capital and operational costs to install approximately three temporary service structures. Municipalities would receive the required funds to deliver the solution most appropriate to their local area.

**3. Improved coordination between municipalities and partners working on homelessness and increased capacity of municipalities to work with homeless persons and effectively respond to community concerns about unsheltered homeless population.**

- **Proposed Activity: Grant Program Manager**

A temporary full-time manager is proposed to coordinate project activities at the cross-jurisdictional level, manage the grant budget and act as a centralized-

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resource for partners involved in the delivery of project activities. The Grant Program Manager would potentially be housed at the City of North Vancouver.

- **Proposed Activity: Expansion of Coordinator duties for the North Shore Homelessness Task Force (NSHTF)**

The District of North Vancouver is a member of the NSHTF and maintains a modest budget of approximately \$9,000 per year for administrative support. This includes funding for the Coordinator. Additional funding is proposed so that the Coordinator could undertake outward-facing activities related to the Strengthening Communities' Services project.

- **Proposed Activity: Training for Culturally Safe and Trauma-Informed Responses**

This would be a training program for front-line staff across the North Shore who have contact with unsheltered populations. Increasing the capacity of eligible applicants to work with homeless person is one of four intended outcomes of the Strengthening Communities' Services Program.

- **Proposed Activity: Updated North Shore Homelessness Protocol**

The Homelessness Protocol is intended to provide a consistent approach and coordinated response to homelessness on the North Shore. It involves members of the police, outreach workers, staff from different municipal departments (e.g. bylaws, parks) and others. It has not been updated in several years. Expanding the protocol would improve coordination and better serve unsheltered homeless individuals on the North Shore.

**Funding request:** Approximately \$300,000 for above four proposed activities

The table below summarizes the preliminary funding request.

<b>UBCM 2021 Strengthening Communities' Services Program - North Shore Application</b>	
1. Supporting the urban Indigenous unsheltered homeless population	\$300,000
2. Mobile and Fixed Location Service Provision	
- Mobile Service	\$700,000
- Fixed Service	\$600,000
3. Improved coordination between municipalities and partners	\$300,000
Total	\$1,900,000

All approved projects would be required to meet physical distancing and other public health guidelines in relation to COVID-19 and comply with applicable privacy legislation under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

The City of North Vancouver has committed to submitting the application on behalf of the three eligible municipalities, and would manage the funds and any associated contracts and

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disbursements. All partner Councils would be apprised of the process and findings at key intervals in the process.

The coordinated approach between the municipalities and First Nations aligns with the objectives of the newly established North Shore Homelessness Action Initiative (NSHAI). The proposed grant activities meet a key aim of the NS-HAI which is to explore alternative and coordinated delivery mechanisms for services and supports on a North Shore wide level.

**Timing/Approval Process:**

The application deadline for the UBCM grant is April 16, 2021. A Council resolution is required. Successful applicants will be notified within 90 days of the application deadline. All approved activities must be completed within one year of the date of the grant award. Extensions must be requested and approved by UBCM, with no extensions exceeding one year.

**Financial Impacts:**

If successful, grant funding would pay for the activities proposed in the regional application. The District's contributions to the project would be comprised of in-kind staff resources to support coordination and implementation of the activities and monitoring of outcomes. In accordance with the objectives of this Safe Restart Agreement between Canada and BC, this funding is meant to bridge the period between the COVID-19 outbreak and the post-COVID recovery period.

Projects are not intended to create ongoing long-term financial obligations that will not be supported by the applicant. Any potential ongoing initiatives that may be identified during the course of the project have funding implications for the District, will be brought forward for Council's consideration.

**Conclusion:**

A regional application to the UBCM 2021 Strengthening Communities' Services Program is recommended. If successful, the project would provide temporary solutions to address urgent and immediate needs of unsheltered homeless individuals on the North Shore. The project would also strengthen coordination across the region and increase capacity to work with homeless persons, Indigenous organizations and others working on housing, homelessness and service provision.

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**Options:**

1. THAT staff are directed to work with the City of North Vancouver and District of West Vancouver to submit a joint regional application for the North Shore to secure funding under UBCM's 2021 Strengthening Communities' Services Program.

AND THAT Council supports the City of North Vancouver as the primary applicant for the North Shore application, to apply for, receive and manage the 2021 UBCM Strengthening Communities' Services grant funding on the District of North Vancouver's behalf.

**(Recommended)**

OR

2. THAT Council provides staff with alternative direction.

Respectfully submitted,



Tina Atva  
Manager, Community Planner



Natalie Chiang  
Planning Assistant



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REVIEWED WITH:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Planning _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Clerk's Office _____	External Agencies:
<input type="checkbox"/> Development Planning _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Communications _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Library Board _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Development Engineering _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Finance _____	<input type="checkbox"/> NS Health _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Utilities _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Fire Services _____	<input type="checkbox"/> RCMP _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering Operations _____	<input type="checkbox"/> ITS _____	<input type="checkbox"/> NVRC _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Parks _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Solicitor _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum & Arch. _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Environment _____	<input type="checkbox"/> GIS _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Facilities _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Bylaw Services _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Review and Compliance _____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning _____	

*per email  
MAR. 29/21*

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